MARVEL
2
30 YEARS
V · MANNA · DIJJO
CARNAGE

YEARS AGO, THE **VENOM SYMBIOTE** SPAWNED, AND ITS OFFSRING BONDED TO SERIAL KILLER **CLETUS KASADY**. IMBUED WITH INCREDIBLE STRENGTH, SPEED, ENDURANCE AND POWERS SIMILAR TO THOSE OF THE **AMAZING SPIDER-MAN**, KASADY AND HIS EXTRATERRESTRIAL "OTHER" SHARE A UNIQUE BOND AND HAVE LONG TERRORIZED THE MARVEL UNIVERSE AS...

CARNAGE

AFTER SEPARATING FROM ITS HOST, THE CARNAGE SYMBIOTE APPROACHED THE SERIAL KILLER, "THE ARTIST," WHO ATTRACTED CARNAGE'S ATTENTION WITH A SERIES OF RITUALISTIC MURDERS, HOPING TO BOND WITH THE ALIEN.

BUT CARNAGE ISN'T INTERESTED...INSTEAD, IT LED THE ARTIST TO A WAREHOUSE WHERE THE SYMBIOTE HAS TRAPPED HYDRO-MAN AFTER BREAKING HIM OUT OF PRISON.

DETECTIVE JON SHAYDE ARRIVED ON THE SCENE JUST AS CARNAGE BEGAN PAINFULLY PULLING HYDR- MAN APART MOLECULE BY MOLECULE—BUT WHAT IS THE CREATURE TRULY AFTER?!

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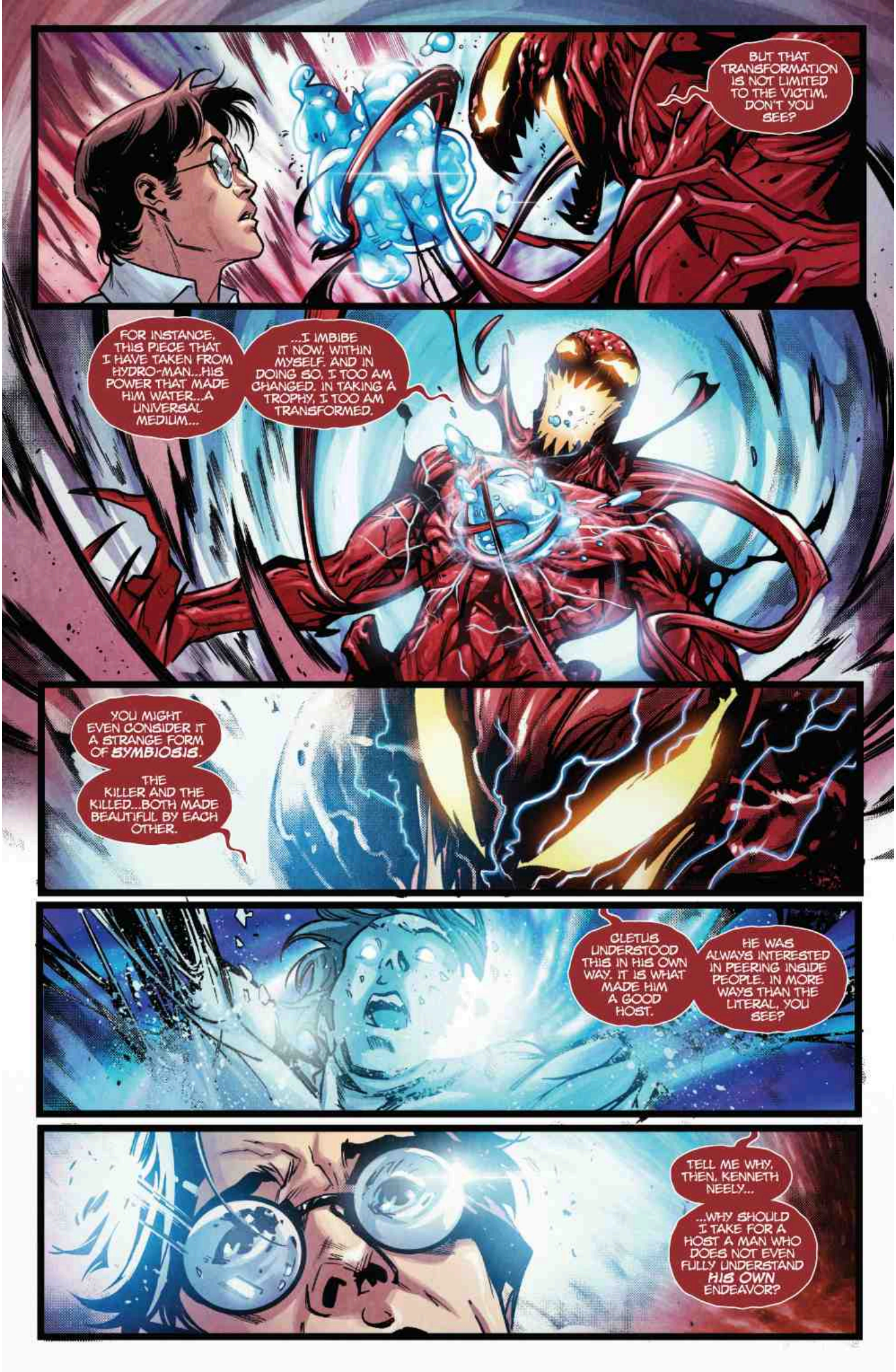
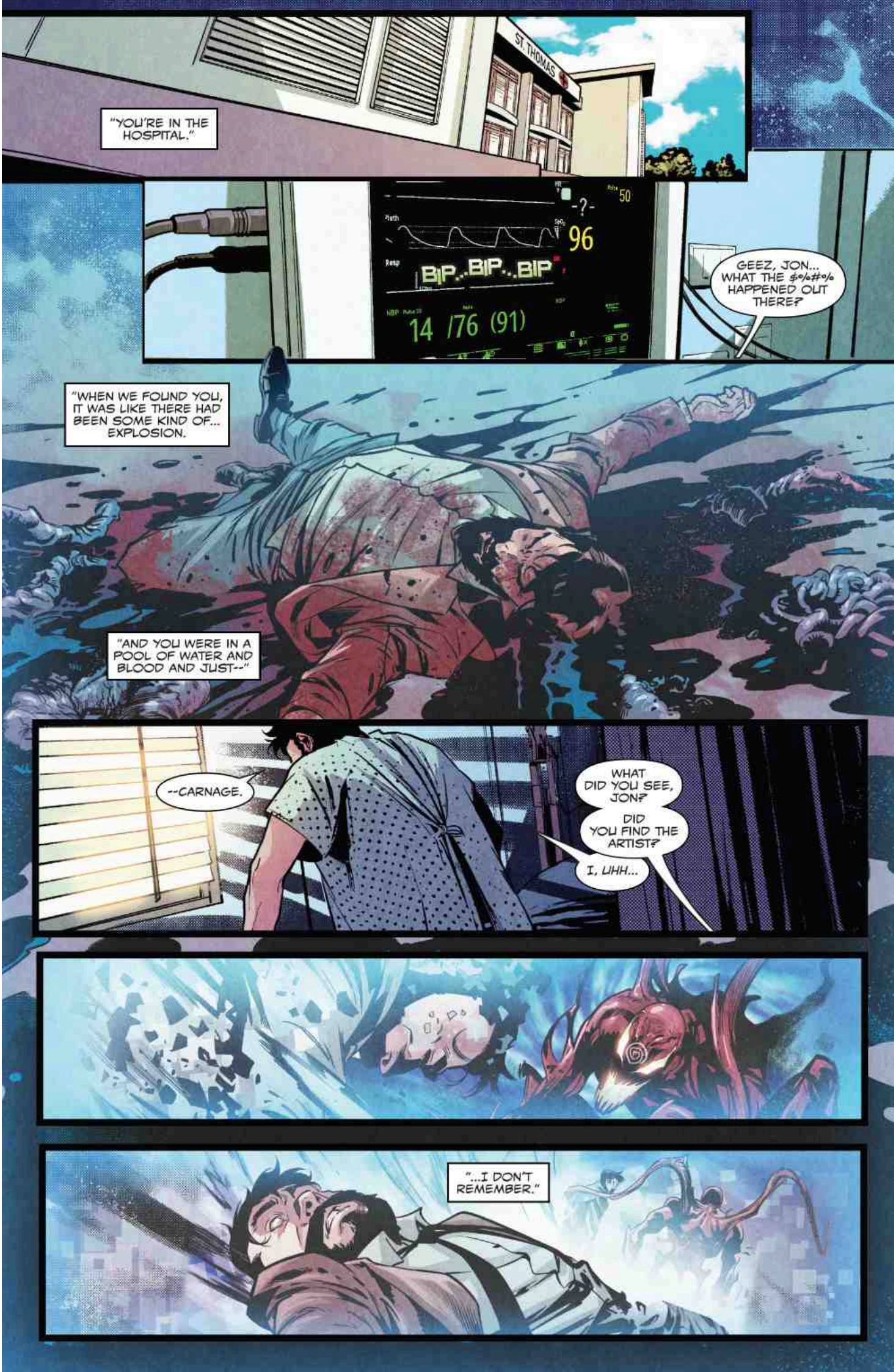
I LEARNED THIS FROM CLETUS.
THE FACT THAT SERIAL KILLERS OFTEN HAVE A FASCINATION WITH TAKING SOMETHING OF THEIR VICTIMS'... A TROPHY.
IS THIS TRUE, KENNETH?
DO YOU HAVE TROPHIES?
I...I TAKE PICTURES. BEFORE AND AFTER.
A MEMORY OF THEIR TRANSFORMATION.
NNNYYARGH!
P-PLEASE!
SHLRRRPT
TRANSFORMATION... YES.


BUT THAT TRANSFORMATION IS NOT LIMITED TO THE VICTIM, DON'T YOU SEE?
FOR INSTANCE, THIS PIECE THAT I HAVE TAKEN FROM HYDRO-MAN...HIS POWER THAT MADE HIM WATER...A UNIVERSAL MEDIUM...
...I IMBIBE IT NOW, WITHIN MYSELF. AND IN DOING SO, I TOO AM CHANGED. IN TAKING A TROPHY, I TOO AM TRANSFORMED.
YOU MIGHT EVEN CONSIDER IT A STRANGE FORM OF SYMBIOSIS.
THE KILLER AND THE KILLED...BOTH MADE BEAUTIFUL BY EACH OTHER.
CLETUS UNDERSTOOD THIS IN HIS OWN WAY. IT IS WHAT MADE HIM A GOOD HOST.
HE WAS ALWAYS INTERESTED IN PEERING INSIDE PEOPLE. IN MORE WAYS THAN THE LITERAL, YOU SEE?
TELL ME WHY, THEN, KENNETH NEELY...
...WHY SHOULD I TAKE FOR A HOST A MAN WHO DOES NOT EVEN FULLY UNDERSTAND HIS OWN ENDEAVOR?

NEELY!
AND WHO'S THIS?
NEEEEELYYYYY... URGH...F-FUH-FREEZE!
Y-YOU'RE UNDER...ARREST... FOR M-MURDER.
OOOOHHH... HOW CURIOUS. HOW CURIOUS!
LOOK UPON THIS MAN, KENNETH.
THIS MAN WHO SAW CERTAIN DOOM AHEAD AND STILL CHOSE TO BE TRANSFORMED BY IT IN PURSUIT OF A GREATER DESIRE.
TO DESTROY YOU!
A COMMITMENT TO HIS ENDEAVOR. THAT IS WORTHY OF OUR ADMIRATION, DON'T YOU THINK?
UH-UH-UH... NOT SO FAST, MY FRIENNNNNND.
KENNETH HERE HAS MUCH TO LEARN. AND YOU...
...YOU AND I ARE ON A SIMILAR JOURNEY.
WE ARE, BOTH OF US, TRYING TO SEE WHERE THE LIMITS TRULY LIE, AREN'T WE?

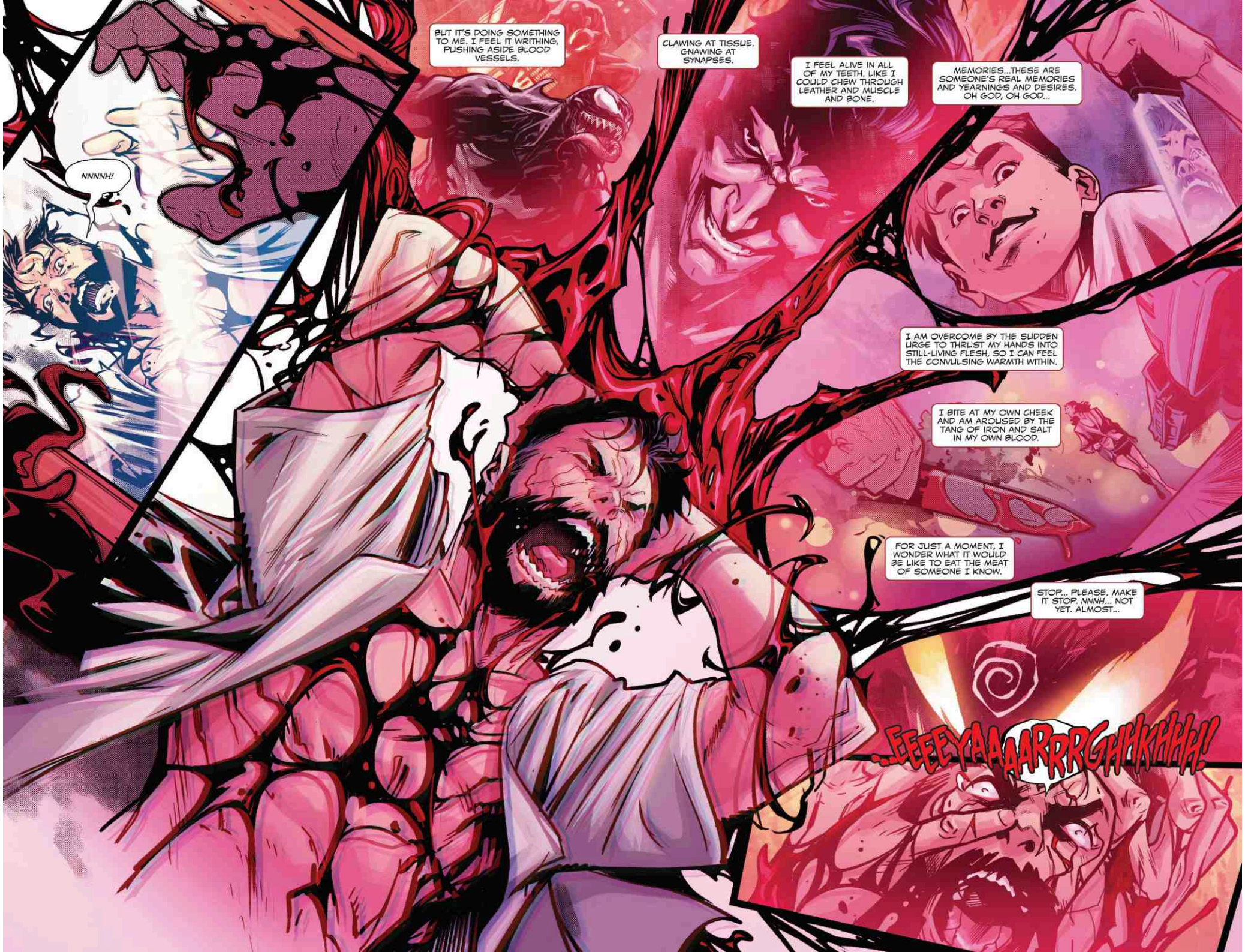
LOOK AT WHAT YOU'VE DONE TO YOURSELF... TSK, TSK, TSK.
YOUR BODY IS FALLING APART IN THE WAKE OF ALL THIS ENERGY EXPELLED FROM HYDRO-MAN.
SURVIVE.
HERE...THIS SHOULD HELP YOU PULL YOURSELF TOGETHER.
CARNAGE
TRANSFORMATION
IF YOU TRULY WANT ALL THAT YOU PURSUE...
...SHOW ME JUST HOW FAR YOU ARE WILLING TO GO.

:GASP:
WHOA... WHOA!
NURSE...! QUICKLY... HE'S AWAKE!
JON, IT'S OKAY! CALM DOWN... IT'S ME, BOOTH!
I GOT YOU!
ALL RIGHT, PAL?
YOU'RE SAFE NOW.


ST. THOMAS
"YOU'RE IN THE HOSPITAL."
BIP..BIP..BIP
96
14 /76 (91)
GEEZ, JON... WHAT THE $%#% HAPPENED OUT THERE?
"WHEN WE FOUND YOU, IT WAS LIKE THERE HAD BEEN SOME KIND OF... EXPLOSION.
"AND YOU WERE IN A POOL OF WATER AND BLOOD AND JUST--"
--CARNAGE.
WHAT DID YOU SEE, JON?
DID YOU FIND THE ARTIST?
I, UHH...
"...I DON'T REMEMBER."

NOTHING?
KEN NEELY WAS THERE AND, UHH...
"...SOMEONE ELSE."
SOMEONE ELSE, HUH? JUST LIKE WITH SPEAKMAN LAST TIME.
I CAN'T REMEMBER CLEARLY...IT'S ALL A BIT OF A BLUR.
IT'S OKAY. IT'LL COME BACK.
BUT YOU NEED TO TAKE IT EASY FOR A WHILE.
NO...SCREW THAT! HE'S OUR GUY, BOOTH. I'M SURE OF IT, AND I ALMOST HAD HIM.
NOW HE'S STILL OUT THERE.
LISTEN, JON. YOU'VE BEEN IN A DAMN COMA FOR TWO DAYS.
THE DOCTOR SAYS YOU'RE PHYSICALLY FINE BUT CAN'T PIN DOWN A CAUSE. NO WAY THE CHIEF'S LETTING YOU BACK ON WITHOUT A FULL EVAL.
"AND THE BLOOD AND GUTS WE FOUND AT THE SCENE? TURNS OUT IT BELONGED TO SOME TOP-SECRET 'ASSET.'
"SO A WHOLE BATTALION OF SUITS HAS DESCENDED UPON US.

"AND THE CHIEF BLAMES YOU. SO YOU NEED TO SIT BACK, LIE LOW, AND RECOVER.
"AND I NEED TO GET TO WORK.
YOU FOUND OUR GUY, JON. I'LL TRACK HIM DOWN, I PROMISE.
"I'LL KEEP YOU IN THE LOOP."
MMMHHH...
KEEP ME IN THE LOOP... HMPH.
TWO DAYS I'VE BEEN IN A COMA, AND THE ONLY PERSON HERE TO SEE IF I'D WAKE UP WAS BOOTH.
NOTHING BUT EMPTY PIZZA BOXES AND UNOPENED BEER AT HOME. NO ONE TO CALL. NO ONE TO TELL I'M OKAY.
I HAVE NOTHING BUT THE WORK, BOOTH. THE LOOP IS ALL I'VE GOT.
-SIGH- "PHYSICALLY FINE," THE DOCTOR SAYS.
MUST'VE STITCHED TOGETHER ALL THE PIECES OF ME BETTER THAN I HAD IMAGINED.


NNNNH!
BUT IT'S DOING SOMETHING TO ME. I FEEL IT WRITHING, PUSHING ASIDE BLOOD VESSELS.
CLAWING AT TISSUE. GNAWING AT SYNAPSES.
I FEEL ALIVE IN ALL OF MY TEETH. LIKE I COULD CHEW THROUGH LEATHER AND MUSCLE AND BONE.
MEMORIES...THESE ARE SOMEONE'S REAL MEMORIES AND YEARNINGS AND DESIRES. OH GOD, OH GOD...
I AM OVERCOME BY THE SUDDEN URGE TO THRUST MY HANDS INTO STILL-LIVING FLESH, SO I CAN FEEL THE CONVULSING WARMTH WITHIN.
I BITE AT MY OWN CHEEK AND AM AROUSED BY THE TANG OF IRON AND SALT IN MY OWN BLOOD.
FOR JUST A MOMENT, I WONDER WHAT IT WOULD BE LIKE TO EAT THE MEAT OF SOMEONE I KNOW.
STOP... PLEASE, MAKE IT STOP. NNNH... NOT YET. ALMOST...
...EEEEYAAAARRRGHHKHHH!

MR. SHAYDE?
IS EVERYTHING...
302
...ALL RIGHT?
OH... OH NO!
SECURITY, THIS IS NURSE MILLS IN THE GENERAL WARD. THE PATIENT IN ROOM 302, JON SHAYDE, IS MISSING.
UHH...NO I...I DON'T KNOW WHERE HE COULD BE.
UMMM...IT LOOKS LIKE HE WENT OUT...

"...THE WINDOW?"
CARNAGE DIDN'T JUST STITCH ME UP AND PUT ME RIGHT.
BY DESIGN OR NOT... MY BODY IS CHANGED. MUSCLES PUSHING FURTHER, HEART PUMPING ON OVERDRIVE.
MY BRAIN FEELS LIKE I'M MAINLINING ADRENALINE STRAIGHT INTO THE FRONTAL CORTEX.
AND I HAVE MEMORIES. ALL THE KEEN EDGES OF CLETUS KASADY'S RECOLLECTIONS.
THEY'RE A GARBLED MESS OF BLOOD AND DEATH AND DEPRAVITY, BUT IT'S ALL THERE.
"SHOW ME HOW FAR YOU'RE WILLING TO GO," THE SYMBIOTE SAID.
I'M FASTER AND STRONGER THAN I EVER WAS, AND I'VE GOT THE WORLD'S MOST NOTORIOUS SERIAL KILLER IN MY HEAD.
IT'LL COST ME, I KNOW...

...BUT I'M COMING AFTER YOU NOW.
BOTH OF YOU.
ALL OF YOU.
MOTEL
WHAT DID YOU MEAN? WHEN YOU SAID TO THAT DETECTIVE...
"...YOU AND I ARE ON A SIMILAR JOURNEY"?

HMMMM? WHY, KENNETH, DO I SENSE A HINT OF JEALOUSY?
IF ANYTHING, MY WAYWARD PUP, YOU SHOULD BE FLATTERED.
IT IS FOR YOU THAT HE MANGLES HIMSELF SO, DON'T YOU SEE?
"YOU ARE HIS DARK MIRROR.
"HE LOOKS INTO THE GLASS HOPING TO SEE HIMSELF, AND ALL HE SEES IS YOU. AND HE LOATHES HIMSELF FOR IT.
"I KNOW THIS ALL TOO WELL. IN THAT PURSUIT, HE AND I ARE TOGETHER."
ALL I'VE DONE IS GIVE YOUR DETECTIVE THE ABILITY TO REACH THROUGH THE GLASS.
NOW HE KNOWS HE HAS ALL THAT HE NEEDS TO OVERCOME YOU. AND THAT KNOWLEDGE WILL CHANGE HIM FOREVER.
SO, YOU SPUR HIM ON? GIVE HIM A PIECE OF YOURSELF SO HE CAN DESTROY ME?
NOT TO DESTROY. NO...

...TO TRANSFORM!
LOOK AT WHAT YOU DO, KENNETH. YOU SPEND ALL YOUR TIME SEEKING BEAUTY IN THE TRANSFORMATION OF YOUR VICTIMS...
...BUT YOU REMAIN THE SAME OLD USELESS, WHINY LITTLE PIECE OF GARBAGE THAT YOU WERE TO YOUR FATHER!
ARE YOU NOT TIRED OF IT?
PERHAPS I EXPECTED TOO MUCH... MAYBE I'VE BEEN UNFAIR IN DRAGGING YOU INTO MY JOURNEY.
NO...! PLEASE, NO. DON'T LEAVE.
I...I WANT TO UNDERSTAND... I WANT TO BE WORTHY!
HMMM... MAYBE THERE IS TIME YET FOR ONE MORE RIDE ALONG.
"WILL YOU COME WITH ME...TO WITNESS MY NEXT KILL?"

OH, @#%&$!
JON! WHAT THE HELL?
YOU ALMOST GAVE ME A HEART ATTACK! WHAT'RE YOU DOING HERE?
I FIGURED YOU WERE THE TYPE WHO BROUGHT YOUR WORK HOME.

IT WAS HYDRO-MAN.
WHO?
THE BLOOD YOU FOUND AT THE SCENE... THAT WAS HYDRO-MAN.
THERE WAS A SYMBIOTE THERE THAT SAID HIS NAME.
'S WHY THERE WAS SO MUCH WATER.
I THOUGHT YOU DIDN'T REMEMBER WHAT HAPPENED?
IT'S ALL COMING BACK TO ME NOW... AND THEN SOME.
:SIGH: YEAH, WELL, THIS HYDRO-MAN IS SOME TOP-SECRET, CLASSIFIED, CLEARANCE-LEVEL-OMEGA %$#&.
THEY'RE HAPPY FOR US TO KEEP LOOKING FOR THE ARTIST, BUT THE BLOOD TRAIL'S GONE COLD.
THEY'RE WORKING TOGETHER, BOOTH... THE ARTIST AND THE SYMBIOTE.
FEEDING OFF OF EACH OTHER. NEELY IS A FAN, LOOKING FOR APPROVAL.
AND THE SYMBIOTE?
LOOKIN' FOR SOMETHING ELSE.
:SIGH: WHEN I SAW YOU THIS MORNING, YOU COULDN'T TELL YOUR ASS FROM YOUR ELBOW.
LOOK AT YOU NOW.

HOW DO YOU KNOW ALL THIS?
YOU'RE NOT LISTENING TO ME, BOOTH.

"THE SYMBIOTE IS RUNNING THE SHOW NOW.
"IF WE FIND IT, WE'LL FIND OUR GUY.

"AND THE SYMBIOTE IS TRYING TO FIND A WAY TO CHANGE...TO ALTER ITSELF. BECOME SOMETHING ELSE... SOMETHING MORE.

"HYDRO-MAN WAS JUST THE FIRST."
"THE FIRST?"
"WE'VE GOT A SERIAL-KILLER SYMBIOTE ON OUR HANDS.

"AND IT'S GOING AFTER SUPERS WHO HAVE POWERS THAT IT WANTS."
WHY HELLOOOOOOO, MY GOOD DOCTOR OHNN.
I'M AFRAID YOU MIGHT BE IN A SPOT OF TROUBLE.
TO BE CONTINUED...

NEXT: ISSUE #3

CARNAGE RULES, AND THE CRIMSON-CLAD CREATURE CRAVES YOUR LETTERS! SEND YOUR NOTES TO **SPIDEYOFFICE@MARVEL.COM.** BE SURE TO MARK THEM **"OKAY TO PRINT"!** –TOM

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ZONE